

Message Text

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62

ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-06 INR-07 INRE-00 SSO-00 SS-15 IO-13

PRS-01 L-03 /056 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/INS:DKUX:EI

APPROVED BY OES/NET:MKRATZER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BOMBAY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 171800

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, IN

SUBJECT: TARAPUR: DECLASSIFICATION OF LETTERS

REF: NEW DELHI 10150

1. YOUR PROPOSAL TO GIVE THE INDIANS TEXT OF SANITIZED
HEEAVY WATER LETTER IS FINE WITH US. WE WILL CABLE FULL
TEXT BY SEPTTEL. YOU CAN PERHAPS PIECE THIS TOGETHER FROM
MATERIAL ALREADY PROVIDED, BUT TO AVOID POSSIBLE CONFUSION,
IT WOULD BE BETTER THAT YOU HAVE CLEAN VERSION.

2. WHEN GIVING THIS TO THE INDIANS, WE SUGGEST THAT YOU
MAKE SURE THEY UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE LETTER
WAS SENT TO THE NRC. IT RESPONDS TO AN OFFICIAL REQUEST BY
THE NRC FOR "CLARIFICATION" OF THE ROLE U.S. HEAVY WATER
PLAYED IN THE 1974 INDIAN TEXT AND WAS PROMPTED BY SENATOR
RIBICOFF'S JUNE 16 PUBLIC CHARGES ON THIS MATTER. WE BE-
LIEVE, BUT ARE NOT SURE, THAT YOU HAVE THE (A) RIBICOFF
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PRESS CHARGES AND (B) JUNE 16 CONGRESSIONAL RECORD WHICH

CONTAINS ADDITIONAL ALLEGATIONS BY THE SENATOR AND ALSO INCLUDES THE TEXT OF THE DEPARTMENT'S EARLIER EXCHANGE OF LETTERS RELATING TO THE HEAVY WATER QUESTION AND ALSO RIBICOFF'S JUNE 16 FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO THE DEPARTMENT TO WHICH WE ARE CURRENTLY PREPARING A REPLY. THE JUNE 29 NRC

LETTER NEEDS TO BE READ AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND AS ITS PURPOSE WAS TO CLEAR UP THE CONFUSION ON THE HEAVY WATER QUESTION AND HOPEFULLY TO PAVE THE WAY FOR THE ISSUANCE OF THE LICENSE FOR AMENDED 805.

3. ON BUYBACK LETTER, WE PROBABLY WILL NOT HAVE ADVANCE WORD ON WHEN THE JOINT COMMITTEE DECIDES TO PUBLICIZE. ACCORDINGLY, TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE, THINK YOU SHOULD MAKE TEXT AVAILABLE TO GOI AT SAME TIME AMBASSADOR INFORMS CHAVAN OF OUR INTENTION TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF OUR EXERCISING THE OPTION. (SEPTTEL)

4. NUCLEONICS WEEKLY OF JULY 8, WHICH IS WIDELY CIRCULATED NUCLEAR TRADE JOURNAL, HAS LEAD ARTICLE ON PRESENT TARAPUR DECISION, INCLUDING QUOTE BY NRC CHAIRMAN ROWDEN THAT "WHAT WAS IN QUESTION WAS INDIA'S GOOD FAITH." ARTICLE ALSO REFERS TO NRC DECISION TO "REVIEW PROGRESS" ON PLUTONIUM BUYBACK AND STATES DEPARTMENT "HAD RESPONDED FAVORABLY" TO POSSIBLE DISCUSSIONS ON THIS MATTER. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT ROWDEN QUOTE WAS IN VIOLATION OF EXPRESS UNDERSTANDING THAT INFORMATION HE PROVIDED ON 805 DECISION WAS FOR BACKGROUND. WE BELIEVE ARTICLE WILL COME TO ATTENTION OF GOI IN DUE COURSE. WHILE WE DOUBT UTILITY OF CALLING IT TO THEIR ATTENTION, WE SUGGEST BEST RESPONSE, IF QUERIED, IS THAT WE HAVE NO FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT ROWDEN MAY HAVE SAID, BUT THAT CHOICE OF WORDS, IF INDEED HIS, WAS UNFORTUNATE, BUT THAT THERE HAD, AS INDIANS UNDOUBTEDLY APPRECIATE FROM EARLIER CORRESPONDENCE, BEEN A QUESTION OF WHETHER U.S. HAD, EVEN IF INADVERTENTLY, BEEN MISLED TO BELIEVE THAT U.S. HEAVY WATER WAS NOT INVOLVED IN THE 1974 INDIAN TEST. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INFORMATION CONTROL, CLASSIFIED INFORMATION, HEAVY WATER
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE171800
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DKUX:EI
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760268-0298
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760767/aaaacgza.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 76 NEW DELHI 10150
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 OCT 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <08 JUN 2004 by buchant0, 3.4.X6>; RELEASED <05 OCT 2004 by vogelfj>; APPROVED <01 NOV 2004 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TARAPUR: DECLASSIFICATION OF LETTERS
TAGS: TECH, IN, US
To: NEW DELHI BOMBAY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006